

METAPROTELLA SANDALENSIS, n. sp.

By DR PAUL MAYER.

THE Caprellidae which I recently received from Mr A. Willey, who requested me to describe them, all belong to the same species. There are 9 males, 5 females and 2 young individuals. Unfortunately almost all the legs had fallen off and the flagella of the superior antennae were broken.

The largest male measured fully 9 mm., not including legs and antennae; the flagellum of the superior antenna, so far as it was present, had 11 segments.



Fig. 1.

The species is new and belongs to the genus *Metaprotella*, Mayer (Mayer, Die Caprelliden des Golfes von Neapel, Nachtrag, 1890, p. 24). It may be named *sandalensis* after the place in which it was found, namely, Sandal Bay, Lifu.

Apart from the character of the mouth-parts, the most distinctive feature of the genus *Metaprotella* is the fusion of the last thoracic segment with the preceding segment (Fig. 1). In the arrangement of the spines, this species closely resembles *M. haswelliana*;

thus, the head carries a pair of spines dorsally and another spine on each side at the point of insertion of the mandibles; further on segment 2, there is a pair of dorsal spines and an unpaired spine at the hinder margin of the segment; the same applies to segment 3; finally in the male there is a pair of robust spines placed latero-ventrally near the anterior margin of segment 2. These latero-ventral spines of the second segment are reduced to mere knobs in the female.

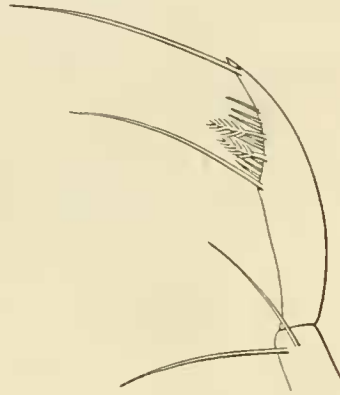


Fig. 2.

The mandibular palp carries at the end between the two long bristles 8 or 9 short simple setae, and two short feathered setae (Fig. 2).

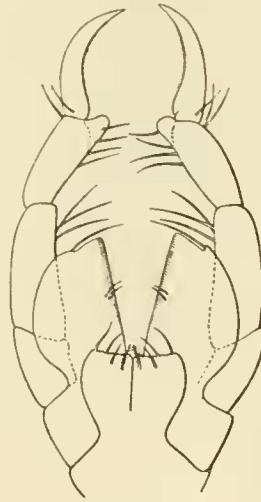


Fig. 3.

The palp of the maxillipede (Fig. 3) has an inwardly directed process at the distal end of the penultimate segment as in *M. haswelliana* and *M. excentrica*. For the rest, the mouth-parts are typically those of *Metaprotella*.

The rudimentary legs of the third and fourth segments are about half as long as the branchiae; they are slender, and provided at the end with one long and about six short setae—the latter somewhat damaged in the specimens.

The form of the first and second legs of an adult male is shown in Figs. 4 and 5, with regard to which it should be noted that the blunt teeth on the palmar margin

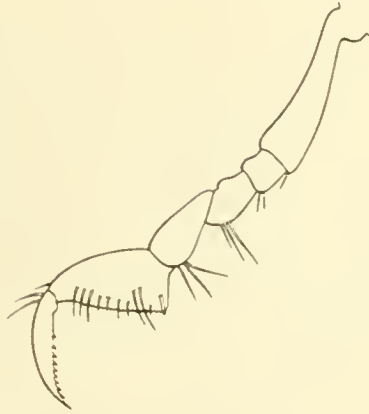


Fig. 4.

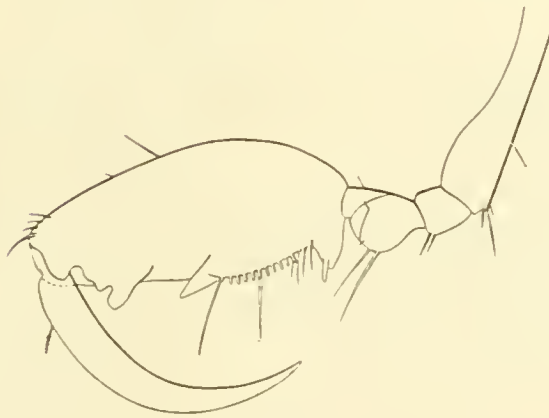


Fig. 5.

of the hand of the second leg (grosse Greifhand) vary considerably in number and appear also to be liable to fall off.

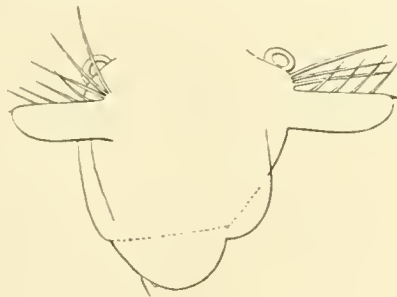


Fig. 6.

The abdomen of the male (Fig. 6) has only one pair of rudimentary appendages.

Habitat. Sandal Bay, Lifu, Loyalty Islands. They were taken, as Willey writes me, "chiefly from the tests of transparent Ascidians which attach themselves in great numbers to the native fish-baskets in from 10 to 15 fathoms of water."

The habitat of the new species is interesting. The other species of the genus *Metaprotella* have hitherto been found in Port Jackson (Australia), and also between Ceylon and the mainland of India and at the Philippine Islands. On the whole, as far as known, in the Tropics, compared with the higher latitudes, not only Caprellidae are rare but also the individuals are relatively small. This rule seems to hold good in the case of Lifu. As for the Equator, I stated years ago (*op. cit.* p. 99) that very likely in shallow water, on account of its high temperature, no Caprellidae whatever may live, and I should be very glad if investigators travelling in those regions or living there would state this assertion to be well founded.

Zool. Station, Naples. *March*, 1898.

EXPLANATION OF THE FIGURES.

- FIG. 1. Adult ♂. × 8. The 3 last pairs of thoracic legs by which the animal hooks on to the Ascidian test, fallen off.
- FIG. 2. Tip of the mandibular palp. × 260.
- FIG. 3. Maxillipedes. × 180.
- FIG. 4. First leg—only the larger setae indicated. × 57.
- FIG. 5. Second leg—apparently somewhat shrunken. × 57.
- FIG. 6. Abdomen of ♂ somewhat compressed. × 260.